



All Access

A newsletter for members and friends of ARNSW, facilitating access to all areas of Amateur Radio.

Issue 26-03 May 2026

Editor Eric VK2VE

Editorial

Welcome to the third issue of All Access for 2026.

We were all, deeply saddened by the passing of Mark Blackmore, a Life Member of ARNSW and, best known as our disposals officer and station engineer. Mark will be greatly missed. Due to his passing, the disposals room will not be open this month as the board organises to stocktake what is there, prices etc. An obituary for Mark is in this issue as well as details of a Celebration of Life. A condolence book will be available at the member meet-up on the 31st.

This issue includes a detailed article on the new VK2Connect system and how to use it by Matt VK2FLY. It details some of the features and how to put them to use to keep your information up to date, pay memberships and other payments. These will now all be handled online.

Also from Matt, a short item on Radnet DMR and the new IPSC3 dashboard.

The BBQ will be running this month with the normal fare along with tea/coffee and cold drinks for sale

We have also had a request from a member in Castle Hill for some assistance with some antenna work. If you are willing to assist, please drop a note to us at editor@arnsw.org.au and we'll give him your number or email so that he can contact you to discuss.

We have another couple of articles from Colin VK2JCC which we are holding over to a future edition as this one is already quite long.

To correspond with us, you can email editor@arnsw.org.au or write to The Editor, All Access, PO Box 6044, Dural DC, NSW, 2158.

Eric - VK2VE – Editor

New members and Silent Keys

In the last two months we welcomed the following new members:

April:

Skye Phillips	Ashfield	VK2YIP
Slawomir Pach	Hunters Hill	VK2TXA
Patrick Latham	Quakers Hill	VK2APT

May:

John Buckley	Rose Bay	VK2LWB
Gary Baxter	Crows Nest	VK2GAB
Dylan Chen	Colyton	Pending

Graham Lange	Northmead	VK2GJL
Francis Lim	Mosman	Pending
Harry Mazzei	West Pymble	VK2UNL
Shayne McBride	Forster	VK2XUV
Mark Perera	The Ponds	Pending
Steve Thompson	Ermington	Pending
Budy Widjaya	Eastwood	Pending
David Wilson	West Pennant Hills	VK2DYW
Andrew Woodward	Bellingen	VK2AWN
Cliff Zimmermann	Sydney	Pending

Rejoining:

Leslie Grant	Wentworthville	VK2KYJ
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We have unfortunately lost the following Silent Keys:

Mark Blackmore	Castle Hill	VK2XOF	An ARNSW Life Member.
Stephen Kuhl	Mascot	VK2TQ	
Luiz Paredes	Dharruk	VK2NZ	

From the Board

At the boards latest meeting held last Sunday several changes were formalised.

1. In future, cheques will no longer be accepted. Cheques are being phased out by the banks and will be totally gone around mid 2029. Some banks are already refusing to honour them which is what has prompted this action.
2. The board has taken the decision to increase membership fees from the end of this month (May 2026), from \$10 per year to \$20 per year. Fees have not increased since the early 2000s.
3. Memberships will now only be for a period of 2 years. The 5 year option is being discontinued.

Mark Blackmore VK2XOF – Obituary

It is with great sadness that we record the passing of Mark Blackmore, VK2XOF, on the 10th of April 2026, at the age of 70.

Born in Sydney, Mark spent some time living with his family in rural NSW, before education and career opportunities saw Mark return to Sydney.

Mark's long career in electronics and communications began as a trainee with AWA, when the company was an integrated manufacturer with nearly every conceivable aspect of a product being produced in-house.

After that broad introduction, much of Mark's focus was on the requirements of production testing. He developed innovative production test systems which



could automate the testing and alignment of complex electronic products, speeding up manufacturing time and reducing product defects. The culmination of this achievement was perhaps in the biomedical sector, developing test systems to ensure the very high reliability required for such critical products.

Outside his career, Mark was also interested in motorsport, four-wheel driving and travel through remote parts of Australia, including expeditions along Len Beadell's Gunbarrel Highway.

And of course, radio. Mark became a radio amateur in the early 1990s, and became involved with several groups, including Amateur Radio New South Wales. He joined the Board of Directors in 2009 and remained an active contributor for many years, with his contributions recognised through the award of Life Membership.

Mark had an extraordinary ability to understand, restore or modify nearly any electronic equipment no matter how esoteric or antediluvian. This was especially relevant to Amateur radio activities – with much equipment given new life on amateur bands through Mark's technical insight and skilled workmanship. Yet, his interests were not confined to electronics of the past; he was equally adept with DSP, microcontrollers, and computer-based control systems.

Although naturally humble and somewhat private, Mark was never shy when it came to teaching and sharing knowledge. Whether an informal group presentation or a one-on-one conversation, he was always kind in feedback and insightful in observation.

Several years ago, Mark sought medical advice for what he initially thought was a flare-up of an old rallying injury; only to receive a diagnosis of an aggressive cancer. True to his curious and analytical nature, he participated in some trial and emerging treatment programs, which not only contributed to broader medical understanding but also gave him several more years of good quality life.

Mark will be remembered not only for his remarkable technical knowledge, but for his willingness to help people succeed, with genuine warmth and humanity. Respected for his knowledge, along with generosity in sharing his time and experience, Mark will be greatly missed.

In keeping with Mark's wishes, no funeral service was held. Instead, there will be a celebration of life for friends to gather over lunch, and remember somebody who undoubtedly enriched the lives of all those who shared time and place with him.

Celebration of Life for Mark Blackmore

Saturday 4th July, 12pm to 3pm
Dural Club, 662A Old Northern Road Dural
RSVP Essential, no later than Wednesday 17th June.
Email to mjb.legacy@pm.me

VK2Connect – How to use it

VK2Connect: A Practical Guide for ARNSW Members

ARNSW is continuing to move more member services into VK2Connect, the online portal and website platform now available at <https://arnsw.org.au>. The aim is simple: give members one clear place to manage their ARNSW details, payments, documents, events, and membership status, while giving ARNSW a cleaner and more reliable way to run the organisation behind the scenes.

All Access is a newsletter published by Amateur Radio New South Wales (ARNSW) for distribution to members and friends of ARNSW. If you wish to comment on any item published, suggest further matters for publication, or submit an article, please contact the editor, Eric VK2VE, by email to editor@arnsw.org.au or post to Editor, ARNSW, PO Box 6044, Dural DC, 2158.

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This article is both an introduction and a short tutorial. If you have not yet used VK2Connect, the best time to start is now. Even if you only log in to check your contact details, that helps ARNSW keep records accurate and reduces manual follow-up for the office and volunteers.

What VK2Connect Does

VK2Connect brings together several things that used to be handled across separate emails, spreadsheets, forms, and manual processes. Members can use it to view and update profile information, check membership status, pay invoices, book events or courses, view member documents, and access membership card functions.

For ARNSW, the same system supports membership management, finance workflows, event administration, document handling, audit logging, kiosk sign-in, site access records, communications, and operational reporting. That does not mean every member sees every function. Access is role based. Ordinary members see member services. Managers, directors, secretaries, developers, and authorised volunteers see only the management functions appropriate to their role.

Why Members Should Log In

The most immediate reason to log in is to check your own details. ARNSW uses member records for membership cards, notices, email communications, event bookings, invoices, and membership administration. If your email address, mobile number, postal address, name, or callsign is out of date, it can affect whether you receive notices or whether ARNSW can contact you when needed.

Logging in also lets you see what ARNSW currently records for your membership status. You can check whether your membership is financial, whether any invoices are outstanding, and when your membership is due. This is much clearer than relying on old emails or asking someone to manually look it up.

How to Access VK2Connect

Open your browser and go to:

<https://arnsw.org.au>

From there, select the membership portal login option. VK2Connect uses modern passkey login where available, with SMS verification used for setup and recovery. A passkey is a secure sign-in method built into modern phones, tablets, and computers. Depending on your device, it may use fingerprint, face recognition, screen lock, or another device security method.

If you are setting up access for the first time, follow the prompts carefully. You may be asked to verify by SMS before registering a passkey. Use your own device where possible. Once registered, future logins should be faster and safer because you will not need to remember another password.

If you change phones or lose access to a passkey, use the SMS recovery process. If your mobile number is no longer current, contact ARNSW so the record can be checked and corrected.

Step 1: Check Your Member Identity

After logging in, start with your member identity and profile details. Confirm that your name, callsign, member number, email address, mobile number, and postal address are correct.

This is especially important before membership cards are produced or replaced. A small typo in a name or address can create extra work and delay delivery. If your callsign has changed, or if you hold previous or other callsigns, check that the information shown is correct.

Step 2: Check Your Membership Status

The portal shows your membership status and due date. If your membership is current, no action may be needed. If an invoice is outstanding, the portal should show the amount and provide the appropriate payment path.

Where a membership has lapsed, VK2Connect is designed to separate that from a simple late payment. A recently expired membership may still be within the grace period. A lapsed membership is beyond that period and may require a rejoin process rather than a normal renewal. This helps ARNSW keep membership records accurate and consistent with the organisation's rules.

Step 3: Pay Fees or Outstanding Invoices

If you have an outstanding invoice, use the payment section in the portal. VK2Connect links payments to member accounts so the invoice and ledger can be updated consistently.

Members should avoid making duplicate payments outside the system unless specifically instructed. If you are unsure, check your portal account first. If something looks wrong, contact ARNSW rather than paying twice.

Step 4: Book Events and Courses

VK2Connect includes upcoming events and course bookings. Events may be open attendance, booking-required, paid, limited-capacity, or closed for booking after a set date. If an event has a booking limit, it may show as sold out when full. If bookings have closed, the event should clearly show that bookings are no longer available.

For courses and some activities, extra questions may be required. For example, some courses may ask whether the participant is over 18 years of age or accompanied by a parent or guardian. These answers are stored with the booking so organisers have the information they need.

If you book an event, read the confirmation prompt before proceeding. This helps prevent accidental bookings.

Step 5: Use Member Documents

VK2Connect can store member-related documents such as application forms and correspondence. This improves record keeping and makes it easier for authorised users to find the correct document later. Access to these documents is controlled. Ordinary members only see appropriate member-facing documents, while management access is restricted by role.

Step 6: Check Your Membership Card Details

The membership card area supports digital card display and card-related options controlled by ARNSW. Depending on current settings, members may be able to view digital card details, order replacement cards, or access other membership card functions.

Members are specifically asked to check the details shown for their membership card before ARNSW begins the initial mailout of cards to new members. Please check your name, callsign, member number, address, and especially your qualification details. ARNSW has received qualification information from ACMA, but it has come to our attention that some records may not be correct.

If your membership card details or qualification details do not look right, please contact ARNSW before cards are printed and posted. It is much easier to correct the record before production than after a card has been mailed. The card depends on the member record being correct.

A Note on Privacy and Security

VK2Connect handles personal information, membership records, financial records, documents, and event data. For that reason, security and access control are built into the system. Member access is separated from management access. Management actions are increasingly recorded in audit logs. Users with privileged access are required to acknowledge ARNSW privacy, confidentiality, and cyber-security obligations.

Members can help by keeping their own contact details current, using passkeys properly, not sharing access, and reporting anything that looks unusual.

What Has Changed Behind the Scenes

A large part of VK2Connect is not visible to ordinary members, but it matters. The platform now supports structured finance records, Square payment handling, invoice status tracking, refunds, event booking records, attendance records, scheduled worker jobs, reminders, backups, and management reporting.

For volunteers and office bearers, this means fewer disconnected manual processes. For members, it should mean faster answers, clearer status information, and less confusion about forms, payments, and bookings.

The system also includes tools for website content management and public events. Upcoming events can be published to the website and calendar feeds, while internal-only or booking-only events can be handled separately. This gives ARNSW more flexibility in how events and courses are managed.

What Members Should Do Now

Please take a few minutes to log in to VK2Connect and check your details. In particular, confirm:

- your name
- your callsign
- your email address
- your mobile number
- your postal address
- your membership status
- any outstanding invoices

If you regularly attend ARNSW events or courses, also check the upcoming events area so you are familiar with the booking process before you need it.

If Something Looks Wrong

VK2Connect is a living system. It is already handling important ARNSW workflows, but it will continue to improve as real members use it and provide feedback. If you find something that appears incorrect, unclear, or difficult to use, report it with enough detail for someone to investigate. A screenshot, the page you were on, and what you expected to happen are often more useful than a general description.

The goal is not just to put forms online. The goal is to build a reliable digital backbone for ARNSW: one that supports members, reduces volunteer workload, improves governance, and gives the organisation better operational resilience.

VK2Connect is now an important part of how ARNSW serves members. Please log in, check your details, and become familiar with the portal. The more accurate the information in the system is, the better it will work for everyone.

Matt – VK2FLY – VK2Connect

Member Meetup & Disposals

Next Sunday, May 31st, is the next Morning Member Meetup and Trash and Treasure in the morning and the ARNSW Experimenters' Group meeting from midday. Due to the passing of our erstwhile Disposals Officer, it was decided that the disposals room will not be open until the board has had the time to work out the future logistics for it, Members will still be able to sell their own items on the day so bring along any items you'd like to sell and browse the items available for sale.

It starts at 9:00 am for buyers, with sellers allowed access from 8:30 am to set up their stalls. Buyers will be allowed in, to park to the north of the VK2WI building but only sellers will be allowed into the sales area to set up prior to 9am. When parking, please have consideration for other members and park in a way that others can get access and as many cars as possible can be accommodated. We can easily accommodate 50+ cars if everyone parks sensibly. Also, please leave access to behind the Vertel compound so that vehicles can get around there if necessary.

The Experimenters' Group meeting will commence at midday. See elsewhere in this issue for details about the Experimenters' group.

IPSC3 Now Live on ARNSW Radnet

ARNSW Radnet has now cut over to **IPSC3**, the next-generation DMR network core being developed locally in Australia. IPSC3 replaces the older IPSC2 platform and brings a number of important improvements to the way Radnet and VKDMR handle DMR traffic.

The new system provides better talk group routing, improved handling of hotspots and repeaters, support for advanced features such as person-to-person private calls, scan talk group functionality, and improved system visibility through a live dashboard.

During the current testing phase, the IPSC3 dashboard is available at:

<http://ipsc3.vk2fly.com>

Once testing is complete and the platform moves fully into production, the dashboard and related information will be moved to:

vkdmr.com

The cutover of the ARNSW Radnet repeaters is an important step forward for the network and will help provide a more flexible, reliable and feature-rich DMR experience for members and users across NSW.

Matt – VK2FLY - Radnet

Experimenters' Group

The next get together of the Radio Experimenters' Group will be held on Sunday 31st May at 12 noon, after the ARNSW members' meet up.

Following on from a recent session about receivers, this meet up will be a practical session on starting to homebrew a 40m receiver. The "Soldersmoke" podcast from the USA has been going for almost 20 years.

A few years ago, they launched a design for a simple 40 metre receiver. The design can be built in four simple modules, variable frequency oscillator, band pass filter, mixer and audio amplifier.

A number of VFO kits will be available to start the build, so those coming to the get together are encouraged to bring their soldering irons and hand tools.

As always, the get together starts with a show and tell segment where anyone can stand up and show something that they have built, been working on, repaired or that they just find interesting. Ideally these segments should be limited to about 5 minutes each. Anyone wanting to present on the big TV is advised to arrive early to work out what they are doing.

So, for those interested in getting their hands dirty to make their own radio are encouraged to come along next Sunday 31st May at 12 noon.

Peter – VK2EMU – Co-ordinator

A Reminder

With VK2Connect now live, you can update your details by logging into VK2Connect but it is still important that we have your correct details. Remember, if we don't have your correct details, you may not get important documents.

If you have any problems, such as not being able to log in, send a message to membership@arnsw.org.au so we can assist you with it. Most important is that your mobile phone number is correct so we may have to fix that manually before you can log in. Ed.

Help Shape ARNSW's Future

New Volunteer Roles Now Open

As published in the last All Access, there are many jobs which can be done by members without having to be on the board, and more volunteers are always welcomed and encouraged. The list of positions sought is again published below.

Priority roles – Events and on-site support

- **BBQ & Food Safety Coordinator** – Oversees safe food handling and BBQ operations at events.
- **On-Site Event Supervisor** – Manages event setup, flow, and on-the-day coordination.

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- **Parking & Traffic Flow Coordinator** – Directs vehicle movement and parking during on site events.
- **Audio-Visual Operator** – Runs sound, teleconference, and AV equipment for presentations and gatherings.

Priority Roles - VK2WI Broadcasts

- **VK2WI Broadcast Operators** – Serve as announcers or technical operators during broadcasts.
- **Audio Segment Producer** – Creates short audio features or interviews for broadcast. *Can be fully remote, flexible time commitment.*
- **VK2WI Operations Coordinator** – Manages the operational schedule and volunteer roster for VK2WI. *Can be fully remote, flexible time commitment.*

Priority Role – Operations Support

- **Equipment Sales & Support** – Assists with equipment sales and member enquiries.

Priority Role - Activity Group Co-ordination

- **Youth Engagement Coordinator** – Develops activities and outreach for younger members. *Partially remote.*

Other activity groups

- **Library and Site operations** – these roles require some on site attendance, but the time commitment is flexible
- **Administration support, outreach and promotion, strategy and governance roles** – can be fully remote with flexible time commitments.

In summary - Whether you have an hour a week or a few hours a month, there is a role where you can contribute your skills and interest, to help strengthen ARNSW. If a role catches your eye, or if you'd simply like to learn more, we'd love to hear from you.

Mathew – VK2YAP - President

Meet Jaye Hennes VK2QRZ – New Director



IT Infrastructure Leader & Systems Engineer

By day, Jaye Hennes is a senior IT Infrastructure Team Lead and Systems Engineer, specialising in managing critical networks, virtualisation, and high-stakes operational technology. He excels at navigating complex enterprise data systems and technical project management, bringing years of corporate IT discipline to everything he touches.

However, it's his lifelong fascination with the world of RF, digital radio, and open-source infrastructure that brings him to the Amateur Radio New South Wales (ARNSW) Board.

Rather than just chatting over the airwaves, Jaye thrives on bridging the gap between modern IT engineering and amateur radio innovation. He specializes in the digital side of the hobby—actively

experimenting with mesh networking, P25 digital protocols, and headless RF telemetry tracking stations. At home, he runs a massive, self-built 7-node home laboratory cluster, treating it as a personal industrial control system. He even fuses this love for data logging into a private, automated brewing project called The Beard Brewing Co, using micro-computers to track real-time process data.

Jaye has a long-standing commitment to community and emergency readiness. He stepped up early on as a trainee recruit with the NSW Rural Fire Service, and over the years has volunteered his time and technical skills for major national fundraising telethons, including the NRL's #RiseForAlex campaign and the Starlight Children's Foundation.

Closer to home, Jaye balances his technical pursuits with a busy family life on the Central Coast as a proud dad of three alongside his loving partner. Within the local radio community, he previously lent his

leadership to the CCARC, serving a term as President and initially joining the executive committee as Vice President—marking a milestone at the time as the youngest executive chairperson in CCARC's 60-year history.

As a member of the ARNSW Board, Jaye is dedicated to empowering the next generation of operators, supporting emergency broadcast resilience, and exploring the future of digital RF and space science. If you see him at an event or catch him on the airwaves, be sure to say hello!

Jaye – VK2QRZ - Director

Shorts

Don't forget – Member Meetup, Trash and Treasure & Experimenters' Meeting:

- ❖ ***When: Sunday, 31st May.***
- ❖ ***Where: 63 Quarry Road Dural.***
- ❖ ***Starting: at 9:00 am for buyers.***
- ❖ ***Gates open from 8:30 am for set up and parking.***
- ❖ ***Don't forget the new 50k speed zone on Quarry Road.***
- ❖ ***If you are queueing to enter, please queue on the opposite side of Quarry Road.***
- ❖ ***Please do not queue on the property side – this is dangerous for approaching vehicles.***
- ❖ ***The disposals room will not be open pending operations review after Mark's passing.***
- ❖ ***Sausage sizzle will be running. More volunteers would be nice.***
- ❖ ***Drinks will be available – both tea/coffee and soft drinks – you can pay cash in the tin in the fridge or use the QR code on the fridge door to pay by card.***
- ❖ ***Experimenters' Group starting at Midday.***
- ❖ ***We look forward to seeing you there.***